

Minutes for ABAC meeting of April 1, 2002

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 pm

Voting members present were C. Tonkin, J. Johnson, T. Packard, S. Smith, S. Miller and R. Sender. Others in attendance were T. Picard, B. Nesbit, P. Howard, B. Lederer, M. Hering(?) and G. Koenig.

J. Johnson began the meeting by congratulating all the voting members present for being appointed (or reappointed) by the Selectmen. He reminded us that we must yet be sworn in by the Town Clerk. The first order of business was to elect officers. The election results were J. Johnson, Chair; T. Packard, Vice Chair and S. Miller Secretary.

Bike Arlington Tour. The tour is planned for May 5 this year. The possible route will be a new one starting in Arlington Heights at Trader Joe's or Herd Field and continuing down the Bike Path or possibly Mass. Ave. towards Alewife. C. Tonkin suggested that we make a detour west from The Heights and visit Great Meadows, a site of much interest to Arlington residents interested in open space. We all agreed that, if possible, we should add Great Meadows to the route. R. Sender thought that most people who ride bicycles even a little would be very familiar with the Bike Path and wondered if we couldn't take a different route to Alewife. J. Johnson proposed taking the tour down Mass. Ave. at least for part of the way to East Arlington. Johnson also suggested that we have a subcommittee meeting next Monday the 8th to discuss the matter in detail.

Regional Bikeway Connections. B. Nesbit attended the meeting to get ABAC's endorsement for putting up signs at the Alewife end of the Bike Path directing users to the other four paths that join the Minuteman at that location. The four paths are the Fitchberg Cutoff running north to Belmont, The Linear Park running east through Somerville and will eventually be extended to Boston, The Fresh Pond Path running to Huron Ave. and around the Pond and the Alewife Brook Path running along the brook south to the Mystic River.

Nesbit also asked for our help in enhancing and publicizing the Alewife Brook Path and lobbying the MDC, the MBTA, and the East Arlington neighbors to create a green way along the brook. Nesbit proposed eventually making the stone dust path along the brook between Alewife and Mass. Ave. Jack mentioned that the path is not clear and a bit of improvement and clearing would go a long way towards making it recognizable and rideable. There has been some neighborhood hostility to the idea of a path so ABAC could help to smooth the way.

Johnson proposed that someone on the committee should coordinate with ABAC and work the Arlington side of the path. M. Herring volunteered. We spent some time discussing the type of signs we would like to see at the end of the Minuteman and making

Quick Status Reviews.

J. Johnson brought to our attention the fact that we need to formalize our relationship with other committees and groups in the Town. We selected liaisons to the DPW (Johnson, Sender), Police (Johnson), Conservation Commission (Johnson), Transportation Committee (Smith), Schools and Recreation Department (Packard) and Waling in Arlington (Miller).

The Bike Parking Warrant Article drafted and sponsored by ABAC was presented to the Redevelopment Board but they have not yet made a decision to endorse. Johnson asked what our strategy would be if they decide not to endorse the article. No one knew for sure.

B. Lederer showed us a hard copy representation of the ABAC web site (abac.arlington.ma.us). Lederer asked for submission and suggestions for content. S. Smith suggested cross links with the web sites of other committees of interest.

J. Johnson reported on the bikeway web site he is creating to supplement the new brochure (minutemanbikeway.org). He informed us that the site is 80% complete. All the information in the brochure except the map will be on the site.

The Minuteman Bikeway brochure is in final design stage. Comments are in from all the towns on the path except Lexington are in. There will be 20k copies printed and it will be available at the end of April or beginning of May.

The bikeway paving contract has been sent out for bidding. Rich Bento hopes to start the work by the end of the month. S. Smith asked if we will be notified when the path will be closed. J. Johnson said that we could put up detour signs as we did when the bridges were replaced. The drainage work behind Security fence is almost finished. In addition, Security Fence has promised to vacate the bikeway encroachment off of Bow street. J. Johnson said that if they actually vacate the space it will be a good size chunk of land and the Open Space Committee should be involved in deciding what to do with it.

G. Koenig reported that he reedited bikeway video (to eliminate the geese) and the new version will be shown on local cable. Koenig's web site is openeyesvideo.com. He suggested that he would like to make a short video about the connections to other paths at the end of the Minuteman Bikeway.

The Mass Ave redesign study was presented last week in East Arlington. S. Smith informed us that the main point of the study is to make it safer for pedestrians. We discussed whether ABAC should take a position. R. Sender suggested that we discuss making a recommendation about which design alternative we endorse at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned 9:40 pm.